

Today's News - Monday, May 2, 2011

- ArcSpace brings us a church in Portugal that gives an identity to its surroundings.
- Rochon minces no words about Toronto's "bureaucracy and the mentality of engineers" who "have messed up our streets," saying the city is "a bottom-feeder when it comes to civic space."
- In a surprise turn-around, a Malibu conservancy group decides not to oppose a multiple-mansion development on a pristine ridgeline (seems \$1 million donation and promise of public open space helped); needless to say, not all are pleased.
- The architect-of-record for New Jersey's ill-fated Xanadu is getting a bad wrap: "the ugly façade wasn't his idea. He just drew the plans" (the "ugly" was also not the architect's design - he resigned ages ago); now there's a new developer and a new name: American Dream @ Meadowlands ('nuff said).
- Saffron has much higher hopes for revamp of Philly's Kimmel Center: "a step-by-step recovery strategy that is fearless in its ambition."
- Hawthorne on Mexico City's Soumaya Museum and its young architect: "an ambitious, even self-consciously iconic, piece of architecture" that "has unmistakable charisma" (and a few missed steps) + the rest of LA Times Magazine's Titans of Design issue (for the new bridge over the Colorado River near Hoover Dam, "necessity became the mother to grandeur" - pix are spectacular!).
- Moore more than admires a new nature reserve visitor center - that floats: "it is rare that the stuff of a building, as well as its relationship to nature, gives so much pleasure...and delightful balance of energies."
- An ode to Selldorf, "a kind of anti-Daniel Libeskind" who mixes "equal parts modesty and authorship" into "an interesting plainness."
- Salant has an amusing conversation with Eisenman re: the difference between a house and a home.
- Fry offers his take (and optimism) on the impact of sustainability-based design thinking and practice on design education in Australia over the last decade.
- An exhibition of furniture by teachers at a Pakistani school of art and architecture sparks student anger and allegations of copycat designs (a most interesting read!).
- MoMA's newest multi-month design program challenges five (impressive) teams to rethink mega-regional housing in this age of foreclosures.
- We cheer Zoe Ryan being named - officially (at last!!) - Chair of the Art Institute of Chicago Department of Architecture and Design.
- An interesting mix of Berkeley Prize 2011 Essay Prize, Travel Fellows, and Architectural Design Fellows announced.
- Diversions beginning before the weekend: NYC's Festival of Ideas for the New City should be an intriguing "design crawl" around the Bowery and Lower Manhattan + Dublin serves up The Fourth Wall film and architecture series.

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Roseta Vaz Monteiro Arquitectos: Church of Senhora da Boa Nova, Estoril, Portugal

Stuck at the corner of Blah and Graceless: On civic beauty, Toronto has failed us...a bottom-feeder when it comes to civic space, producing Third World strips of concrete for pedestrians to trudge along rather than First World ramblas of surprise and encounter...bureaucracy and the mentality of engineers have messed up our streets. By Lisa Rochon- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Agency won't oppose Malibu-area compound, in return for funding and dedicated open space: The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy reverses course on a proposal by U2 guitarist the Edge for multiple mansions on an undeveloped ridgeline...in exchange for more than \$1 million in funding, consulting services and dedicated open space...- Los Angeles Times

Xanadu 'architect of record' feels he's gotten a bad rap: Every disaster needs a scapegoat. But sometimes that label is misplaced...the ugly façade wasn't his idea. He just drew the plans...blames developer budget-cutting on an exterior that many New Jerseyans call an eyesore. -- David Jansen/Adamson Associates; Rockwell Group- NorthJersey.com (New Jersey)

Rejuvenation plan offers brighter future for Philadelphia's Kimmel Center: ...a step-by-step recovery strategy that is fearless in its ambition...if the Kimmel implements the master plan, it won't have to rely any more on...gimmicks to pack 'em in. By Inga Saffron -- Rafael Viñoly (2001); Penn Praxis; KieranTimberlake [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Starship Enterprise: Carlos Slim's Soumaya Museum unites avant-garde architecture, civic virtue and good old-fashioned commerce: ...an ambitious, even self-consciously iconic, piece of architecture...as part of a larger urban slice of Mexico City. As an example of architectural sculpture, the museum has unmistakable charisma. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Fernando Romero; David Chipperfield- Los Angeles Times Magazine

Titans of Design: a list of 50 classic works by the trailblazers, past and present, who shaped the form and spirit of Southern California + Act 2: Mayer Rus traces how Roy McMakin reimagined one house...with the aid of garden designer Art Luna + High and Mighty by Michael Hiltzik & Jamey Stillings: the new bridge over the Colorado river wasn't designed as a work of art, but necessity became the mother to grandeur. [images, slide shows]- Los Angeles Times Magazine

Brockholes nature reserve visitor centre: at a wildlife reserve near Preston – the floating visitor centre offers a reassuring glimpse into a flood-proof future: ... use the pursuit of sustainability as the means to create more beautiful buildings, not less...it is rare that the stuff of a building, as well as its relationship to nature, gives so much pleasure...and delightful balance of energies. By Rowan Moore -- Adam Khan [image]- Observer (UK)

The Form Mistress: In an age of highly expressive architecture, Annabelle Selldorf is about restrained and understated elegance...a kind of anti-Daniel Libeskind, creating structures and interiors that offer an intriguing combination of discipline and seduction, authority mixed with charm, equal parts modesty and authorship...an interesting plainness. [slide show]- Wall Street Journal

Peter Eisenman on the difference between house and home: "Architects design houses. I live in a home"...he divides his time between two homes, neither of which he designed...one "a dumb little apartment" in New York City...the other as a "wonderful old New England house"... By Katherine Salant- Washington Post

A decade of design: Education: ...the impact of sustainability-based design thinking and practice on the progress of design education in Australia...The test of progress here can be measured by the degree sustainability has transformed the curriculum of the schools...if the institution hasn't done this already, the educator's activity is merely token. By Tony Fry -- EcoDesign Foundation (EDF); Design Futures and Sustainment- Australian Design Review

At top art school, debate on imitation versus inspiration rages after teachers exhibit work: Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture...students grumbled that their teachers...had 'plagiarised' ideas for their exhibition...hurling allegations at some of the most well known names in Pakistani design. -- Institute of Architects Pakistan (IAP); Tariq Hasan; Ahsan Najmi; Maria

Aslam Hyder [images]- Express Tribune (Pakistan)

MoMA Design Program to Promote Rethinking of Housing in Light of Foreclosure Crisis: Five teams of architects...will focus on a "megaregion," a metropolitan area that lies within a corridor between two major cities...."Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream"... By Robin Pogrebin -- Amale Andraos/Dan Wood/WORK Architecture Company; Michael Bell ; Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang; Hilary Sample/Michael Meredith/MOS; Andrew Zago/Zago Architecture- New York Times

Art Institute of Chicago to name Zoe Ryan as chair of department of architecture and design: ...replacing Joseph Rosa, who left last year to head the University of Michigan's art museum. By Blair Kamin- Chicago Tribune

Berkeley Prize 2011 Essay Prize, Travel Fellows, and Architectural Design Fellows announced- Berkeley Prize

Design Crawl on the Bowery: Worms by Family and PlayLab win Storefrontfor Art and Architecture's StreetFest competition...From May 4 to 8, the no-small-plans Festival of Ideas for the New City...involving some 30 Downtown organizations and city agencies... By Julie V. Iovine -- Rem Koolhaas [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

The Fourth Wall: film and architecture series explores and illuminates the point of encounter between architecture and the moving image; Dublin, Ireland, May 5-16- Irish Architecture Foundation / Irish Film Institute

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